Hit man dies in car bombing

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ST. LOUIS — A convicted hit man, the brother-in-law of a key figure in the congressional investigation of the Martin Luther King Jr. assassination, was killed yesterday by a bomb that destroyed his car. John Paul Spica, who served time in the Missouri Penitentiary at the same time as convicted King assassin James Earl Ray, was the brother-in-law of Russel G. Byers, who told the House assassinations committee that a $50,000 bounty had been placed on King's life. Congressional investigator Conrad Baetz said Spica also was called before the committee, but said he knew nothing of any plot to assassinate King.